

Task Force C Meeting Summary Monday, August 15, 2005

Participants: Cheryl Kobernik (Chair) – North Star Organics, Elaine Brown – Michigan Food and Farming Systems, Melinda Curtis – Select Michigan, Ben Kudwa – Michigan Potato Industry Commission, Christine Lietzau – MI Department of Agriculture: Select Michigan, Marla Moss – MI Department of Education, Patrice Murdock – Brighton Public Schools, and Leland Wheaton – Charlotte Public Schools.

The first Task Force C: Promoting Michigan Foods meeting convened Monday, August 15, 2005 from 11:00am-1:30pm at Constitution Hall in Lansing. Council Member Cheryl Kobernik chaired the meeting.

Ms. Kobernik called the meeting to order at 11:00am and welcomed the Task Force Participants to the first Task Force C Meeting. Those present introduced themselves and described their work. Ms. Kobernik explained the Task Force's charge and how the Task Force's work fits into the Michigan Food Policy Council structure. Task Force C is responsible for researching programs and policies that promote institutional and public purchase and consumption of Michigan foods. Ms. Kobernik stressed the importance of the Task Force's work and that of the MFPC by sharing an article featuring MFPC by Patty Cantrell titled, "In Local Fruits, Vegetables, A New Prosperity Beckons."

MFPC staff member, Kristin Brooks, went over the Executive Order goals assigned to Task Force C. The goals are:

1. Promoting institutional and public purchase and consumption of Michigan-grown and Michigan-processed foods.
2. Identifying or recommending programs or pilot programs that enhance access to Michigan-grown foods and Michigan-processed foods.
3. Developing strategies aimed at enhancing connections between Michigan growers and Michigan food outlets.
4. Recommending policies or activities intended to increase spending on food dollars on Michigan-grown and Michigan-processed foods by 10%.
5. Advising MDA regarding the "Select Michigan" program.
6. Recommending approaches that maximize coordination of existing federal, state, and local resources and capture additional federal resources for Michigan.*
7. Make recommendations to MDA on the adoption of policies to advance the goals for the Council in the Order.*
8. Identifying strategies to increase collaboration and communication between state agencies in the delivery of food-related programs and evaluation of collaborative opportunities.*
9. Develop and adopt 6-month, 12-month, and 18-month recommended action plan for achieving the goals of the Council.*

*Assigned to all four Task Forces

The participants discussed different initiatives and coalitions that fall under the purview of the Task Force. Among those mentioned were a newly formed Farm-to-School Coalition, the Select Michigan program and its numerous partnerships, and an agreement between the Michigan Potato Industry and the state correctional system.

Ms. Kobernik led the participants in a discussion about the objectives and activities the Task Force would work towards to fulfill the Executive Order goals. Participants agreed to work on objectives relating to restaurants using and featuring Michigan foods, increasing the number of schools that purchase Michigan foods and urban neighborhoods that have access to Michigan foods, promoting inter-agency collaborations, and increasing procurement of federal funds. Participants also recommended adding an objective that increased opportunities for state correctional facilities to purchase Michigan foods.

After much discussion about possible issues to explore, participants agreed to work on activities regarding a state policy that preferences Michigan food purchases, defining "Michigan food," reviewing the Select Michigan program, researching non-governmental institutional feeding programs, developing policies for more Michigan foods in restaurants, grocery stores, and K-16 institutions.

A timeline to reach the activities and objectives was not set during the meeting and participants acknowledged that the activities and to some degree the objectives will fluctuate over time. Staff will revise and fine tune the objectives to reflect the recommended changes and participants agreed to review them before the next full Council Meeting, so that Ms. Kobernik can give an accurate report of the work accomplished in the first Task Force C meeting.

The next Task Force C meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 19, 2005 from 1:30pm-4:00pm.